

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 3, 2020

The Honorable Alex Azar, Secretary
U.S. Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue Southwest
Washington, District of Columbia 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

A major Congressional priority in the recently enacted *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act* is the “Marshall Plan” for hospitals and other medical facilities, with Congress providing \$100 billion in funding through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to reimburse health care providers for care or lost revenues attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding is critical to strengthening our health care systems and it’s why we urge you to move swiftly to distribute these funds to health care providers as expeditiously and equitably as possible, including the issuance of clear guidance on the criteria used to qualify for and access the funding.

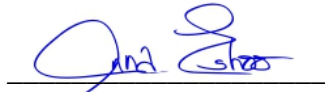
This funding serves an important dual purpose during the COVID-19 emergency. First, there are the front-line providers in current and soon-to-be “hot spots” that need direct funding to provide the equipment, personnel, and services required to safely treat COVID-19 patients. There are also providers who have cancelled treatments or closed their offices to comply with social distancing guidelines. Providers in our Congressional Districts have lost as many as 80 percent of patient visits due to stay-at-home orders and they will not be able to recoup this revenue when this crisis is over. In order to have a fully functioning health care system both during this crisis and beyond, the \$100 billion needs to be distributed directly to health care providers as quickly as possible. No hospital can absorb the loss of millions of dollars of revenue in a week and survive.

As HHS develops its criteria for funding, it’s important to consider the following:

- The complexity of coronavirus cases, lost revenue, actual expenses (including medical supplies, equipment, workforce and retrofitting space to treat patients), and the expense of coordination and preparedness;
- Priority disbursements for front line providers, with attention to size of the entity, range of services provided, complexity of patients served, number of Medicare and Medicaid patients served, whether they serve a rural or medically underserved area, and other key characteristics;
- Current “hot spots” and future “hot spots;” and
- The importance of getting initial installments to hospitals and other medical providers expeditiously to meet the immediate financial and public health challenges of the crisis.

We urge you to issue guidance expeditiously so that our nation's health care providers can access the critical source of funding Congress provided. We stand ready to work with you in any way possible to help America's families and health care providers successfully recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

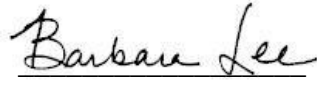
Most gratefully,



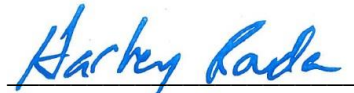
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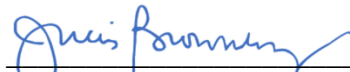
Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



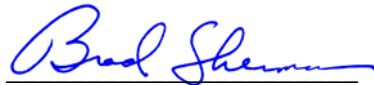
Lucille Roybal-Allard
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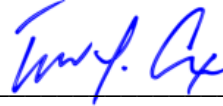
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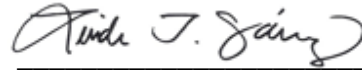
TJ Cox
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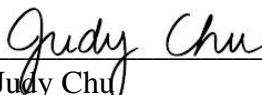
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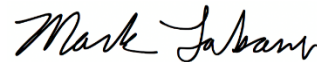
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